

Outpatient Therapy Video Transcript

Hello. My name is Aracely Portillo. I am a family navigator in the Waisman Center. Today, we are talking about outpatient therapy. We are going to answer these questions.

What is outpatient therapy?

Why is outpatient therapy helpful?

What is important to know about outpatient therapy?

How do you connect with outpatient therapy?

Where can you learn more about outpatient therapy?

First, let's answer the question **what is outpatient therapy?**

Outpatient therapy is speech, occupational or physical therapy. Outpatient therapy is usually done in a clinic. Outpatient therapy can help your child if they have a diagnosed disability or a delay in meeting their milestones. If you feel your child needs extra help with the way they play, learn, speak, act or move, outpatient therapy might help. Speech therapy works on communication skills. This includes your child telling you their wants and needs and having conversations with you. It also includes understanding what others say to them and following directions. Occupational therapy works on many skills. This includes fine motor skills or how your child uses their hands to do things. It also works on sensory concerns and managing their emotions. Occupational therapy also helps your child learn play skills and daily living skills such as dressing and feeding. Physical therapy works on gross motor skills such as walking, running, balance, strength, and more.

Next, let's talk about **why outpatient therapy is helpful.**

Outpatient therapy helps work on specific skills your child needs to develop. They can use these skills at home and in the community. If your child is receiving therapy through Birth to 3 or their school, you may still want extra support for your child through outpatient therapy. With your permission, outpatient therapists can work with your child's therapists at a school or Birth to 3. They can share with them about how they are working with your child so they can coordinate care.

What else is important to know about outpatient therapy?

Outpatient therapies are usually paid for by your private health insurance or Medicaid. Check with the therapy clinic to know which insurances they accept. They can work with you and your insurance provider to get approval for therapy. If your child has health insurance and is receiving therapy at a school, your outpatient therapy needs to work on different goals that the school

therapist. Otherwise, health insurance might think it is duplication of services and won't pay for the outpatient therapy. Outpatient therapists are required to look at your child's IEP, individualized education plan, from school to make sure their goals are different. For example, at school, your child might work on using a crayon or scissors. In outpatient therapy, your child might work on using a fork or a spoon. School staff might ask you to sign a form that allows them to bill your child's Medicaid for therapy. It is up to you to decide if you want to allow the school to bill Medicaid. If you sign the form and give permission, you can change your mind in the future. Your child and your family are important to the outpatient therapist. They want to be your partner in helping guide your child's learning and growth. Depending on your child's developmental concerns, there is a chance they will not fully fix the problem. However, they will work with you to build your child's skills as much as possible.

So how do you connect to outpatient therapy services?

You will need a written referral from your child's primary care provider. They can send the referral directly to the therapy clinic. This referral is important for insurance coverage. To find a list of therapy clinics in your area, you may contact your Child's primary care provider. You can also contact your local Children's Resource Center. More information about how to contact your local Children Resource Center will be in the end of this video. Once that referral is placed, the therapy clinic will call you. They will schedule an evaluation for your child. This evaluation will help them understand your child's strengths and the areas where your child needs more support. When the evaluation is complete, you and the therapist will talk about goals for your child. You will also talk about how often your child will be seen in that therapy. How often your child has therapy depends on your child's needs, your schedule, and the therapist's schedule. Don't worry too much about how often your child has therapy appointments. What is just as important is that you work with your child at home, too. The therapist will give you activities to do with your child. Many of these activities can be worked into your regular play with your child. If your child is receiving more than one kind of therapy in the same clinic, most clinics can try to schedule those therapies back to back on the same day. Some clinics may stay open a little later in the day. A few might offer limited weekend hours. Please know most clinics are open only during daytime hours though, just like doctor's office. If needed, you can give permission for family members or friends to bring your child to the therapy if you are not available. Make sure the clinic is aware of that ahead of time.

Finally, where can you learn more?

Talk to your child's primary care provider or call your local Children's Resource Center. They can help you identify outpatient therapy providers in your area. Please see the resource link in the video details. All of these resources are available the QR code in this screen. Thank you so much for joining us today, and we look forward to seeing you next time.